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WRIT IN BARRACKS

BY

EDGAR WALLACE

No subject

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Wallace

WRIT IN BARRACKS

WRIT IN BARRACKS

BY

EDGAR WALLACE

METHUEN AND CO.
36 ESSEX STREET: STRAND
LONDON
1900

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DEDICATION

TO THE RANK AND FILE OF

THE ROYAL ARMY MEDICAL CORPS

AMONGST WHOM I SPENT SIX HAPPY YEARS

OF MY LIFE, THIS COLLECTION OF VERSES

MOSTLY WRITTEN IN BARRACKS

IS ADMIRINGLY

DEDICATED

RONDEBOSCH
April 4, 1900

'Ginger James' appeared originally in the 'Daily Chronicle,' 'Make your own Arrangements' in the 'Pall Mall Gazette,' as also did 'T. A. in Love.' 'Legacies' is reproduced by the kind permission of the 'Daily News,' and 'Arthur' and 'Her Majesty has been Pleased—' of the 'Evening News.' Most of the others are new to the English reader.

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WAR

I

A TENT that is pitched at the base:
A wagon that comes from the night:
A stretcher—and on it a Case:
A surgeon, who 's holding a light.
The Infantry 's bearing the brunt—
O hark to the wind-carried cheer!
A mutter of guns at the front:
A whimper of sobs at the rear.
And it 's *War*! 'Orderly, hold the light.
You can lay him down on the table: so.
Easily—gently! Thanks—you may go.'
And it 's *War*! but the part that is not for show.

WRIT IN BARRACKS

II

A tent, with a table athwart,
A table that 's laid out for one ;
A waterproof cover—and nought
But the limp, mangled work of a gun.
A bottle that 's stuck by the pole,
A guttering dip in its neck ;
The flickering light of a soul
On the wondering eyes of The Wreck,
And it 's *War* ! 'Orderly, hold his hand.
I 'm not going to hurt you, so don't be afraid.
A ricochet ! God ! what a mess it has made !'
And it 's *War* ! and a very unhealthy trade.

III

The clink of a stopper and glass :
A sigh as the chloroform drips :
A trickle of—what ? on the grass,
And bluer and bluer the lips.

WAR

The lashes have hidden the stare. . . .

A rent, and the clothes fall away. . . .

A touch, and the wound is laid bare. . . .

A cut, and the face has turned grey. . . .

And it's *War*! 'Orderly, take It out.

It's hard for his child, and it's rough on his wife,

There might have been—sooner—a chance for his life.

But it's *War*! And—Orderly, clean this knife!'

ARMY DOCTOR

ARMY DOCTOR! Army Doctor!
'Ere 's some 'cruities for inspection,—
Some in rags, an' some in cuffs.
Some in shirts, an' some without 'em,
Wot a blessed strange collection!
Served before? You needn't doubt 'em,
Bloomin' muffs!

Army Doctor! Army Doctor!
Take your sword, an' drop your lancet,
Teach your nurses 'ow to fight!
'Ow to march the dead march—solemn!
'Ow to route march—an' to dance it!
Teach 'em 'ow to march in column,
By the right!

ARMY DOCTOR

Army Doctor! Army Doctor!
Gold an' velvet! 'broidered lacin's,
'Oldin' 'igh your bloomin' 'ead!
'Seen you peel that coat so winnin',
'Seen you stain them pretty facin's,
'Seen your 'ighly glossy linen,
Splattered red!

Army Doctor! Army Doctor!
'Sun is 'ot—an' we are learnin'
Lessons in the cholera school,
We're fear-sick, an' mad as 'atters,
Throat a-parchin', 'ead a-burnin',
Seems to me, *you*'re takin' matters
Rather cool!

Army Doctor! Army Doctor!
Spurs and swagger! Cuff an' collar!
Up to ev'ry bloomin' trick!

WRIT IN BARRACKS

'Seen you—as I've seen none other—
Go to—where *I* dursn't foller!
'Seen you act the man and brother
To the sick!

Army Doctor! Army Doctor!
Things by Engineers forgotten,
You 'ave got to recollect.
Tho' you 're such a gilded dandy,
When the meat is goin' rotten,
Chances are, *you* 're somewhere 'andy
To inspect!

Army Doctor! Army Doctor!
Where the firin' never ceases,
Where the 'uddled soldier lies,
Where the Mauser bullets shave 'im,
Gawd! they're chippin' 'im to pieces!
Git 'im out of fire an' save 'im. . . .
Well done, Guys!

NICHOLSON'S NEK

They gave their best at Waterloo,
For the honour of England's name;
They threw their best on a hundred fields,
To put our foes to shame.
'Tis good that England's soldier men
To-day can do the same.

They have proved their worth,
To the ends of the earth.
They have striven and won,—and failed!
They have shown their might,
On the Dargai Height,
When the *mollah's* bullets hailed.

WRIT IN BARRACKS

They have laid their dead,
In the river bed,
  On the site of their last brave stand.
They have buried at night,
By a lantern light,
  In a grave that they scooped in the sand.

And far and wide,
They have done and died,
  By donga, and veldt, and kloof.
And the lonely grave,
Of the honoured brave,
  Is a proof—if we need a proof,
They won—and died,
And we glorified
  The men of the barrack schools.
They died—and failed,
And in wrath we railed
  At the fault of the bungling fools!

NICHOLSON'S NEK

And perhaps it is good
That we change our mood,
  And perchance it is well to blame,
And to seek elsewhere,
For some men to bear,
  The weight of our foolish shame.
But the fight hard fought,
Must it go for nought
  Because of its hapless turn?
Must we then withhold,
For the life hard sold,
  The Honour it died to earn?

When hot and tired,
With the last round fired,
  And never a ray of hope—
What then the shame?
They were just the same
  Who charged Talana's slope!

WRIT IN BARRACKS

You may give and take,
As the shrapnels rake,
  When your batt'ry has replied;
But you cannot live
When there 's too much give,
  From the guns on the open side.

Good men are they,
Who gain the day,—
  And victory is sweet,—
And just as brave
Who do not rave
  At every small defeat.
For the fight hard fought
Must not go for nought,
  Because of its hapless turn;
Nor we withhold,
For the life hard sold,
  The Honour it died to earn.

NICHOLSON'S NEK

We gave our best at Waterloo,
For the honour of England's name;
We threw our best on a hundred fields
To put our foes to shame.
'Tis good that England's soldier men
To-day can do the same.

MY PAL, THE BOER

We met without appointment on an 'ill,
I comed upon the beggar without warnin';
Layin' down be'ind a boulder,
With 'is rifle to 'is shoulder,
He sent along wot 's Dutch for a 'Good-mornin'.'
'E missed me with a fair amount of skill,
An' 'fore 'e 'd time to mount, an' get from danger,
I was takin' of my rest,
By a sittin' on 'is chest,
An' a sayin' to the welcome little stranger:—

'My pal, the Boer!
You 're a prisoner of war'

MY PAL, THE BOER

('E tried to break my jaw, but that's a trifle);
'You can't escape me, can yer?
In the name of Rule Britannia,
I commandeer your 'orse an' Mauser rifle!'

You wouldn't call 'is manners over bright,
An' you wouldn't term 'is disposition sunny,
An' 'e 'ad a silly notion
That the cause of the commotion
Was Chamberlain a-fightin' for 'is money;
An' 'e fancied that the British flag was white—
'Twas a silly fancy—still we must excuse it,
When the Lancers came along
'E felt a trifle *bong*!
'E soon found out the proper way to use it!

My pal, the Boer,
Ain't used to proper war,

But tho' 'e scorns the flag an' does the grandy,
The 'igh an' mighty scorner,
When we get 'im in a corner,
'E FINDS A FLAG OF TRUCE IS MIGHTY 'ANDY !

SONG OF THE FIRST TRAIN THROUGH

LINE Clear to Witteputs! I wind around the guarded hill,
And thunder o'er the lean long bridge that spans the sombre stream;
No uptorn rail to devastate, no culvert gap to fill,
And where the outpost feared to ride, I gather up my steam.

(*I passed a little mound of earth that bore the cross's sign,—*
A Colonel, and a dozen men, who fell to clear the line.)

Line Clear to Belmont: and I feel the ballast shaking
down:
My flanges bite the new-laid rail and prove the new-
thrust pin.
On either side the purple ridge, the veldt land sickly
brown,
The 'distant off' says 'Welcome,' and the 'Home'
says 'Come ye in.'

(*Two thousand guardsmen rushed the Kop—a score are*
buried here,
And here are laid some Fusiliers—they fell to give
Line Clear.)

Line Clear to Graspan: so I run adown the gentle
grade,
Nor notice in my joyful haste the kopje stubble
grown,

And wildly bouldered foot to crest where fell a half brigade,
What time the bristling mountain-side with segment shell was sown.

(*The mess-deck and the ward-room thinned to give the line pratique*
Line Clear from Graspan—so, half-mast the Ensign at the Peak.)

Line Clear: along the new-spliced wires that droop from pole to pole,
By Enslin, where the helio glared fitfully and fleet,
The word is passed across the plain to where the rivers roll,—
To where, tree-fringed in eddying swirls, the Modder meets the Riet.

(*In heat and thirst and weariness a hundred dying lay,*
A hundred bloody forms grew stiff to give me Right Away.)

WRIT IN BARRACKS

Line Clear: I face the grim gaunt range that stretches
east and west
('Twas by its base, near Magers farm, that Wauchope's
men went down):
I skirt the ridge that hid the guns, and gleefully I
breast
The easy rise that brings in view the long-beleaguered
town.

(*Line Clear: o'er blood, and sweat, and pain, and*
sorrow's road I ran,
And every sleeper was a wound, and every rail a man.)

THE NAVAL BRIGADE

WHEN you 're pickin' your men for a fight,
When choosin' the corps that 'll serve,
It 's only quite proper an' right
To fix upon muscle an' nerve,
An' so, to your heavy Dragoons—
Your Granny-dear Guards an' their band—
To your Sappers with bridgin' pontoons,
You can buckle the Lower Deck Hand!

(*The Lower Deck Hand*
Doesn't want any band;
He 's grit, an he 's sand
Is the Lower Deck Hand.)

WRIT IN BARRACKS

His march is a go-as-you-please;
  He most keeps step with hisself!
For his boots ain't conducive to ease,
  Bein' mostly kept packed on a shelf!
Tho' he isn't so span or so spic—
  Tho' his marchin' ain't what you 'd call grand—
He gets to the front just as quick
  Does the elegant Lower Deck Hand!

(*The Lower Deck Hand*
  Wasn't reared in the Strand;
But he 's good to command,
  Is the Lower Deck Hand.)

You may swear by the jolly marines,
  'Per marey, per tarey' they fight—
Not speakin' for them in their 'teens—
  I don't mind admittin' your right.

But all that the Joey has got,
As I 'd have all the world understand,
He 's learnt—well, he 's learnt quite a lot
From his tooter—the Lower Deck Hand!

(*The Lower Deck Hand*
Is a mine that 's unpanned;
An' he 's yours to command,
Is the Lower Deck Hand.)

He doesn't shape well at Reviews,
I 've known him to spit in the ranks;
But we 've never been asked to excuse
A fault, when he 's guarding the flanks.
An' when there 's a break in the square
Or a place where the Line cannot stand,
I 'll tell you the chap to put there—
'Jack Mullow'—the Lower Deck Hand.

WRIT IN BARRACKS

(The Lower Deck Hand
Will die as he'll stand;
He's tempered an' tan'd,
Is the Lower Deck Hand.)

When you're hemmed in a tight little hole,
By a greatly outnumbering foe,
It's a matter of stokin' an' coal
How far we're away from the foe.
When the Infantry's needin' some aid,
When the 'tillery gets under-man'd,—
Make way for the Naval Brigade!—
His Highness the Lower Deck Hand!

(The Lower Deck Hand
With his guns he can land,
An' he'll kick up some sand,
Will the Lower Deck Hand.)

THE ARMOURED TRAIN

THERE 's risk on the ballasted roadway,
  There 's death on the girdered bridge,
Red ruin from sleeper to sleeper,
  And wreck on the bouldered ridge.
No signal to herald my coming,
  No whistle to waken the plain ;
Stand clear—I am out for patrolling !
  Make way for the Armoured Train !

I run not to time, nor to table,
  I 'm neither an 'Up' nor a 'Down,'
But 'Full speed ahead' is my order,
  When skirting the enemy's town.

WRIT IN BARRACKS

My mails have a backing of cordite,
  My luggage is powder and shell,
With smoke-stack a-blazing I thunder,
  A traveller's sample of Hell!

They have laid me a mine by a culvert,
  They have loosened a bolt by a curve,
But thrice-tested steel is my muscle,
  And thrice-tested brass is my nerve.
A curse for their bungling folly,
  A laugh for the death-trap that fails,
A hang for the enemy's miner,
  So long as I keep to the rails.

A cheer—and I pull from the township
  To spy out the enemy's line;
A plunge—and I rush into darkness
  As reckless of wreckage as mine.

THE ARMOURED TRAIN

And what if a rail has been lifted?
  And what if a river's unspanned?
I fail, but I know in the failing
  I strove at the Empire's command.

They were men who at Badajos conquered,
  They were men who for Wellington struck,
And a Man is the Man at the Throttle,
  And a Man is the Man on the Truck.
Undismayed I may go to destruction,
  For I know at the end I may feel
I die with the men on the footplate,
  I pass with my brothers in steel.

MAKE YOUR OWN ARRANGEMENTS

When the depôt soldier's dinin' on three-quarters of a pound,
If there's too much bone to please 'im, or the meat is extry tough,
'E'as got a chance of grousin' when 'is orficer goes round,
'E can draw upon the mess-book, if 's rations ain't enough.
But it's make your own arrangements! Make your own arrangements!
When you're cut orf from the column, an' supplies are runnin' low,
It ain't no 'too much fat, sir!'
But it's bread—an' glad of that, sir!
O it's *bake* your own arrangements—out of flour—as you go!

MAKE YOUR OWN ARRANGEMENTS

When the depôt soldier's on parade 'e sparkles an' 'e shines.

When the depôt soldier's drillin' 'e must make each motion 'tell.'

When the depôt soldier's marchin' 'e must march on drill-book lines.

'E 'as got a drill-instructor, an' 'e does it very well.

But it's make your own arrangements! Make your own arrangements!

When the camp is rushed at midnight, an' you're fallin' in—to die!

O there ain't no drill-rules set there,

But it's take your gun—an' get there!

When you make your own arrangements, you must grab your belt an' fly.

The depôt soldier's grounded in a systematic drill;

'E also knows wot's 'rendezvous' an' what is 'bivouac.'

WRIT IN BARRACKS

'E knows the use of rifle-pits, the proper way to kill—
'E understands the principles an' the'ries of attack.
But it's make your own arrangements! Make your own arrangements!
When you 're dodgin' tons of boulder, climbin' mount'ins under fire,
An' the drill-book won't assist you
Till the fallin' rocks 'ave missed you!
So you make your own arrangements—an' you climb a little 'igher!

When the depôt soldier's wantin' with 'is orficer to speak,
'E must 'alt two paces from 'im, an' salute before the start.
An' 'e mustn't try to argue, an' 'e mustn't give no cheek;
An' if 'is Captain slangs 'im—'e must take it in good part.

MAKE YOUR OWN ARRANGEMENTS

But it 's make your own arrangements! Make your own arrangements!

When you see 'im lying wounded, all the circumstances change.

An' you don't 'eed no instructions;

An' you don't need introductions;

But you make your own arrangements—an' you get 'im out of range.

When the depôt soldier sickens, when the depôt soldier dies,

'E is buried by 'is comrades in the regulation style.

'E is covered by an ensign of the regulation size,

An' 'e gets a firin' party made of thirteen rank an' file.

But it 's make your own arrangements! Make your own arrangements!

WRIT IN BARRACKS

When the Colonel reads the service by a guard-room
lantern light.
When in silent rows you 've laid 'em
In a trench your bay'nets made 'em,
O, it 's make your own arrangements when you bury
in the night!

GINGER JAMES

A SPELL I 'ad to wait
Outside the barrick gate,
For Ginger James was passin' out as I was passin' in;
'E was only a recruit,
But I give 'im the salute,
For I 'll never git another chance of givin' it agin!

'E 'd little brains, I 'll swear,
Beneath 'is ginger 'air,
'Is personal attractions, well, they wasn't very large;
'E was fust in ev'ry mill,
An' a foul-mouthed brute, but still
We 'll forgive 'im all 'is drawbacks—'e 'as taken 'is discharge.

WRIT IN BARRACKS

'E once got fourteen days,
For drunken, idle ways,
An' the Colonel said the nasty things that colonels sometimes say;
'E called him to 'is face
The regiment's disgrace—
But the Colonel took 'is 'at off when 'e passed 'im by to-day.

For days 'e used to dwell
Inside a guard-room cell,
Where they put the darbies on 'im for a 'owlin' savage brute;
But as by the guard 'e went
They gave 'im the present,
The little bugler sounded off the 'General Salute.'

The band turned out to play
Poor Ginger James away;

GINGER JAMES

'Is Captain an' 'is Company came down to see 'im off;
An' thirteen file an' rank,
With three rounds each of blank;
An' 'e rode down on a carriage, like a bloomin' city toff!

'E doesn't want no pass,
'E 's journeying first-class;
'Is trav'lling rug 's a Union Jack, which isn't bad at all;
The tune the drummers play
It ain't so very gay,
But a rather slow selection, from a piece that 's known as 'Saul.'

'HER MAJESTY HAS BEEN PLEASED—'

Wot a crowd of people!
Wot a sea of faces!
'Ow the ladies' parasols are glist'nin' in the sun!
Troops in 'open order,'
Captains in their places.
Wish the day was over, and I wish the job was done!

Wot a lot of civvies!
Mus' be 'arf the city!
Like a mob on Boxing-night outside Drury Lane!
Ain't it perfect weather?
More 's the blessed pity!
Wish instead of sunshine it was pourin' 'ard o' rain!

'HER MAJESTY HAS BEEN PLEASED—'

Comes of bein' famous—
Mentioned in despatches!
Comes of me a-carrying the Major to the rear!
Empty stomach fighting—
Getting sleep by snatches!—
'Ow the troops must cuss me for a-keeping them out 'ere!

'Ow the people eye me,
Like a choice chrysanth'um!
'Ow this collar 's chokin' me!—Lord! I 'm feelin' sick!
Troops are at the 'shoulder'—
'Pre-sent'—there 's the anthem!
'Ow I 'ope 'er Majesty will get it over quick!

Wonder if I 'm dusty?
'Elmet feels lopsided!
Chuck a chest for 'Eaven's sake! *Lord,* I 'm feelin' queer!

WRIT IN BARRACKS

Twenty times they 've brushed me,

Twice 'ave I been tidied,

Yet I 'm feelin' mucky still. Private Jawkins? 'ERE!

Face the lan-dow panels,

Dumbly; likewise blindly,

Seein' in a sorter mist a lady dressed in black:

'Ear 'er sof'ly talkin'.

Thanks, mum, thank you kindly!

Saw the Major fallin', and I 'ad to take 'im back!

Thank you, mum—your 'Ighness—

Majesty, I mean, mum!

'M sure I 'm much obliged to you for this 'ere pretty Cross!

Bless you, you 're a lady!

Mean you are the Queen, mum!

On'y picked the Major up an' shoved 'im on an 'orse!

'HER MAJESTY HAS BEEN PLEASED—'

'Saw our Sub go under,
'Alf 'is men around 'im
Cut to bits—an' 'im so young,—yes mum, *very* sad.
Yes mum, 'e was buried
In the place we found 'im.
Thank you, mum,—your Majesty (God, I 'm feelin'
bad !)

ARTHUR

'Oo 's the Gen'ral 'ere? sez I;
'Oo 's the Gen'ral 'ere?
'O, 'e 's a Prince o' the Royal Blood, so you 'aven't
got nothin' to fear.'
But 'e marched me 'ere, an' 'e marched me there,
To burn blank cartridges everywhere;
An' 'e made me sweat, an' 'e made me swear—
Did Arthur!

Wot can the Gen'ral do? sez I;
Wot can the Gen'ral do?
'O, 'e 's a Prince o' the Royal Blood, an' 'e don't
know much about *you!*'

But 'e doubled me round on a big field day:
An' 'e checked me for loafin'—a mile away!
An' I found there 's a time for work an' play
With Arthur!

Wot 'as the Gen'ral done, sez I?
Wot 'as the Gen'ral done?
'O, 'e 's a Prince o' the Royal Blood, an' they
chucked 'im 'is rank for fun!'
But that was a lie, for I found out since
'E 's ninepence a soldier an' thruppence a prince!
'E stood fire in Egypt, an' *'e* didn't wince!
Not Arthur!

Wot does the Gen'ral know? sez I;
Wot does the Gen'ral know?
'O, 'e 's a Prince o' the Royal Blood, an' 'e 's on'y
got up for show!'

But I 'chanced' kit inspection, an' thought it a
'cert.';
But 'e put me down, smart, for a tunic an' shirt!
An', insult to injury—checked me for dirt!
Did Arthur!

'Ow is 'e liked by you? sez I;
'Ow is 'e liked by you?
'O, 'e's a Prince o' the Royal Blood, but I reckon
some'ow 'e 'll do!'
I'm willin' to risk, as I've done before,
A Fox 'Ills fight, or a native war,
Or front rank man in an Army Corps,
With Arthur!

Wot is 'e, after all? sez I;
Wot is 'e, after all?
'O, 'e's a swaddie, the same as you, an' 'e goes
to the "orficers' call"!'

ARTHUR

'E 's a gentleman, Tommy, when all 's said an'
done !
'Is ma is the lady 'oo 's second to none,
An' we love 'er the better because of 'er son—
That 's Arthur !

LEGACIES

THE dog is yours; and so 's the photo frames,
Them pictures wot I cut, an' my new box.
The pack of cards, the dominoes, an' games,
The knittin' needles, an' the knitted socks,
An' all, except the letters and the ring—
You 'll find them all together tied with string.

My public clothin'—that goes back to stores—
My kit 'll sell by auction on the square;
An' other fellers will be 'formin' fours'
An' 'markin' time' in boots I used to wear.
They 're welcome; but you won't forget to send
The ring an' all the letters to my —— friend?

The pain ain't near so bad as wot it were
  The day they dragged me from the limber
    wheels;
Ain't I a wreck! for God's sake don't tell 'er;
  Say it was fever—peaceful—in the 'ills;
An' write about the wreaths, the 'Jack,' and band,
An'—send a bit of hair: you understand?

The ring—— Oh no, the doctor lets me talk,
  I ain't a-tirin'—'cept a funny light,
An' just a feelin' that I 'd like to walk
  To where it seems to flicker in the night.
Better for me to go with aching 'ead,
Than go in trouble with my say unsaid.

The ring—it ain't long since she sent it back;
  I never meant no 'arm, God only knows,
But things—I can't tell *now*—looked very black,
  And she believed the others—I suppose.

WRIT IN BARRACKS

I 'm sorry for 'er now—that cursed wheel !—
You see she is a woman, an' she 'll *feel.*

. . . . . .

The dog is yours, I told you that before.
The spurs you 'll find 'em in my private kit.
The letters, an' the ring, an' nothin' more,—
An' hair—it 's foolish—but a little bit.

. . . . . .

'Our Father'—Lord, how strange! It 's all—
ri'—sir.
The—lett—an'—th'—ring—an'—hair—for—'er !

T. A. IN LOVE

DREAMIN' of thee! Dreamin' of thee!
Sittin' with my elbow on my knee.
I *orter* be a polishin' the meat-dish an' the can—
(I *orter* draw the groceries—for I am ord'ly man!
But wot are bloomin' ration calls, an' wot 's a pot or pan,
When I 'm dreamin', O my darlin' one, of thee?)

Dreamin' of thee! Dreamin' of thee!
Firin' at the rifle range I be.
I 've missed a fust-class targit—an' I 've missed the 'ill be'ind!
I nearly shot a marker once! (which wasn't very kind);
The orficer 'e swears at me—but re'ly, I don't mind!
I am dreamin', O my darlin' one, of thee!

WRIT IN BARRACKS

Dreamin' of thee! Dreamin' of thee!
Me, as was the smartest man in 'B'!
My kit is all untidy, and it 's inches thick in dust;
An' my rifle's fouled an' filthy, an' my bay'nit 's red with rust;
They 've tried to find the reason—but I 've seen 'em furder fust!
An' they never guess I 'm dreamin', dear, of thee!

Dreamin' of thee! Dreamin' of thee!
They can't make out wot 's comin' over me.
The fellows think I 'm barmy, an' the Major thinks it 's drink,
The Sergeant thought it laziness, so shoved me in the clink!
The Colonel called it 'thoughtlessness,' so gave me time to think,
An' to dream again, my darlin' one, of thee!

T. A. IN LOVE

Dreamin' of thee! Dreamin' of thee!
Wot's two 'ours' sentry-go to me?
A sittin' in the sentry-box, a-thinkin' of your eyes,
The ord'ly orficer come along, an' took me by surprise!
'E said as I was sleepin'—an' the usual orfice lies!
When I was on'y dreamin', love, of thee!

Dreamin' of thee! Dreamin' of thee!
Rubbin' tarry oakum on my knee!
Oh, when I weigh that oakum in, I know I'll cop it 'ot!
I'll be 'auled before the Gov'nor, an' I'll git an 'our's shot;
But whether I git punishment, or whether I do not,
They can't prevent me dreamin', love, of thee!

TOMMY ADVISES

TAKE your rifle from the rack:
Take your bay'nit from the shelf;
Clean your straps for marchin' order,
An' git ready for the Border.
For it ain't no sham attack,
So you needn't kid yourself.
It's a ball an' bay'nit action
With the perfect satisfaction
Of a medal, an' a ribbon, and perhaps a clasp or two.
For a-doin' of the little job your betters couldn't do.

Pack your socks, an' fold your shirt,
Wash your water-bottle out,
It 'll make your marchin' easy
If your boots are nice an' greasy,—

An' some dubbin wouldn't 'urt.
You can chuck your weight about;
There 's an 'appy day before you,
When the civvies will adore you,
And the things wot used to shock 'em will be favoured with a smile,
And your little faults an' failin's won't be noticed for a while.

Git a guernsey out of store—
Winter 's very cold above,
An' the wind an' rain will find you
If you leave your clothes behind you!
Trust your pretty self before
Any Quartermaster's love;
For there 's no store to go unto
An' no tailors' shops to run to;
For it ain't no ten days' skirmish these manœuvres wot you 're in,
An' a little flannel weskit 'ides a multitood of skin!

WRIT IN BARRACKS

Write your letters for the mail;
Tell your people all the news—
For your folks 'll prize the writin'
Of 'my son who 's out a-fightin'.'
Don't you spin an awful tale,
Just to give your mother blues,
For the day the boys are cryin'
'List o' wounded, dead and dyin'!'
Will be tons of time for them at 'ome to feel a trifle blue,
When they see a dozen Smiths are killed—and wonder which is you!

THE NUMBER ONE

THE number one, 'e 's on the bridge,
There 's goin' to be a row,
The Gold Coast is upon our port,
An', 'ull down, on our bow,
Makin' for 'ome for all she 's worth—
A slaver's bloomin' dhow !

The number one is on the bridge,
The buntin' tosser 's aft;
An' down below, in the 'eat an' glow,
The men are at their graft.
They 've peeled their shirts, to get the steam,
To over-'aul that craft.

WRIT IN BARRACKS

The number one is in command,
The skipper 's sick below,
A touch o' fever from the coast,
'As made the old man so;
But 'e 's passed the word to the engineer,
'For Gawd's sake make 'er go!'

The 'gen'ral quarters' sounded orf,
The bugler 's made a call
(A call that means the 'red' marines,
With fifty rounds of ball,
Are goin' to git a medal an' clasp,
Or an ensign for a pall!)

The number one is on the bridge,
The sun is low an' red!
An' shot an' shell, like fiends of 'ell,
Are shriekin' round 'is 'ead,
An' three marines are crippled,
An' their sergeant-major 's dead!

THE NUMBER ONE

The number one is on the bridge,
The dhow 's a battered sight;
'Er rascal chief 'as come to grief;
'E 's fought 'is final fight,
But the number one lies on the bridge,
An' 'is face is ghastly white.

A smile is on 'is bloodless lips,
'Is sword 'angs from 'is wrist,
And a lock of 'air of a maiden fair,
Is clasped in 'is bloodstained fist,
But 'e 'll meet 'er at the great roll-call,
When they muster by 'open list'!

BRITANNIA TO HER FIRST-BORN

I AM no maiden, highly strung,
To faint, when bloody death is nigh.
I have not lived, by might of tongue
Nor by vain boastings, wind-wide flung!
But on fame's endless ladder, I
Have fought my way, from rung to rung!

I am no fretful, whimp'ring miss;
I am a woman, learned of years.
And once I felt your baby kiss:
Your bliss for me had greater bliss!
Your youthful sorrows had my tears.
O son o' mine, remember this!

BRITANNIA TO HER FIRST-BORN

Your foes were mine, in those dear days:
Your friends were kind, and kin to me.
We parted—so, we will not raise
The long dead years. We went our ways,
I, brooding by the cold grey sea;
You, pride-flushed, with your new-won bays!

The years have passed; it does but seem
As yester-eve you left my side.
I journeyed with you, dream on dream—
I heard your great war eagle's scream!
And on sweet Progress, your fair bride,
I saw the sun of Fortune's beam!

I mourned your follies, word and deed;
I watched your rising, when you rose,
By sober prayer, by Cross and Bead;
Until you found that greater Creed,
That in the broader channel flows,
The lowly truths, that higher lead!

WRIT IN BARRACKS

You are my son, and born of me.
My laws of Right are Laws to you
Whose hands were stained in blood, to be
The hands that set the slave-man free!
And now, again, you dare and do—
For Justice, and Humanity!

The days to be are big with Fate!
Go fight your battle, Son o' mine:
And State to Shire, and Shire to State,
Its better self shall dedicate!
So, let the wily foe combine,
Whilst, hand-locked, heart-locked, we can wait!

TOMMY TO HIS LAUREATE

(CAPETOWN, *January* 25, 1898.)

O GOOD-MORNIN', Mister Kiplin'! You are welcome
to our shores:
To the land of millionaires and potted meat:
To the country of the 'fonteins' (we 'ave got no
'bads' or 'pores'),
To the place where di'monds lay about the street
At your feet;
To the 'unting-ground of raiders indiscreet.

I suppose you know this station, for you sort of keep
in touch
With Tommy wheresoever 'e may go;

An' you know our 'bat's' a shandy, made of 'Ottentot
an' Dutch,
It's a language which is 'ideous an' low,
Don't you know
That it's 'Wacht-een-beitje' 'stead of ''Arf a mo'?'

We should like to come an' meet you, but we can't
without a pass;
Even then we'd 'ardly like to make a fuss;
For out 'ere, they've got a notion that a Tommy isn't
class;
'E's a sort of brainless animal, or wuss!
Vicious cuss!
No, they don't expect intelligence from us.

You 'ave met us in the tropics, you 'ave met us in the
snows;
But mostly in the Punjab an' the 'Ills.

TOMMY TO HIS LAUREATE

You 'ave seen us in Mauritius, where the naughty
cyclone blows,
You 'ave met us underneath a sun that kills,
An' we grills!
An' I ask you, do we fill the bloomin' bills?

Since the time when Tommy's uniform was musketoon
an' wig,
There 'as always been a bloke wot 'ad a way
Of writin' of the Glory an' forgettin' the fatig',
'Oo saw 'im in 'is tunic day by day,
Smart an' gay,
An' forgot about the smallness of his pay!

But you 're *our* partic'lar author, you 're our patron an'
our friend,
You 're the poet of the cuss-word an' the swear,
You 're the poet of the people, where the red-mapped
lands extend,

WRIT IN BARRACKS

You 're the poet of the jungle an' the lair,
An' compare,
To the ever-speaking voice of everywhere!

There are poets wot can please you with their primrose-vi'let lays,
There are poets wot can drive a man to drink;
But it takes a 'pukka' poet, in a Patriotic Craze,
To make a chortlin' nation squirm an' shrink,
Gasp an' blink;
An' 'eedless, thoughtless people stop an' think!

Yes, the 'and wot banged the banjo an made Tommy comic songs,
'Oo wrote of Empires, 'Lion's 'Ead to Line,'
'Oo found an 'idden poem in M'Andrew's Injin gongs,
Was the checkin' 'and wot gave the warnin' sign,
In a line—
That gave the people soda after wine.

THE MISSION THAT FAILED

Our troop was encamped by the side of a stream
An' a very smart troop were we.
We 'ad Cavalry orficers—straight from town,
An' we escorted Mister Commissioner Brown,
Commissioner Brown, C.B.
An' we 'eard that the Governor put 'im down,
For a spare K.C.M.G. !

We wos camped near by to a border town,
On the borders of Creegerland—
A very despotic, republican state—
An' there we 'ad got the order to wait,
But why, we did not understand.
So we bedded our 'orses, an' cussed at our fate
(For you can't cuss the man in command).

WRIT IN BARRACKS

One mornin' sez Mister Commissioner Brown,
  Sez 'e to the 'ole parade,
'I've bin inspired by a dream just now—
  I can't say why, an' I can't say 'ow—
But a voice in my dream it said,
  "O in Joannistown there's a deuce of a row
And badly they want your aid!"'

Now Joannistown is in Creegerland,
  Which same is a friendly state.
An' it isn't no joke—which is puttin' it fine—
  To pass without notice the border-post
    sign;
But we did it, as I will relate.—
  We really intended to drop 'em a line!
But we 'adn't got time to wait.

We 'ad ridden some miles into Creegerland
  When Commissioner Brown, C.B.,

THE MISSION THAT FAILED

'E called an 'alt,—which a troop requires,
For a man, 'e tires, as 'is 'orse perspires,—
An' 'e sez to the troop, sez 'e,
'About ten miles from 'ere are some telegraph wires,
An' a very good thought struck me.

'For fear of my dream bein' misunderstood
An' the evil constructions of liars!—
For fear of alarmin' the dear farmers' wives
An' disturbin' the quiet an' peace of their lives,
I think we will sever them wires!
An' I 'll give somethin' 'andsome to 'im 'oo contrives
To cut off the current—with pliers!'

An' Michael M'Carty, Lance-Corp'ral was 'e,
Right guide to a section of 'A,'
Started orf on the job, an' we whispered a cheer,
An' we each gave the beggar our flasks—full of beer—

To 'elp for to lighten 'is way!
We gave 'im cheap drinks—though it was very dear
When it came round to settling day!

M'Carty 'e rode, an' M'Carty 'e swilled,
An' M'Carty got big in the 'ead,
Till 'e couldn't tell telegraph poles from trees,
An' 'e wandered around, sorter go-as-you-please
Till 'is wonderin' wanderin's led
To the wires—of a fence! an' reclinin' at ease
'E cut up these wasters instead!

It's all over now: an' Brown 'e got jugged,
And the Burghers of Creegerland knowed.
They licked us to fits in a sweet little fight,
An' the King of Jerusalem wired 'is delight!
An' the Laureate wrote us an Ode!
An' Europe got ready for action that night
'Cos M'Carty got drunk on the road!

THE MISSION THAT FAILED

M'Carty 's a thief, M'Carty 's a beast,
  An' M'Carty is likewise a liar!
'E went an' got drunk, which 'e shouldn't 'ave done;
  'E went an' got drunk, an' 'e spoilt the 'ole fun:
An' the moral to them wot conspire
  Is, *Don't send a beer-swilling son of a gun*
When you 're cuttin' a telegraph wire!

THE PRAYER

O God of Battles! Lord of Might!
A sentry, in the silent night,
I, 'oo 'ave never prayed,
Kneel on the dew-damp sands, to say,
O see me through the comin' day—
But, please remember, though I pray,
That I am not afraid!

O God of Battles! Lord of Might!
'Ere in the dusky, starry light,
My inner self I 've weighed;
An' I 'ave seen my guilt an' sin;
I 'm black as black can be, within,
But though I would forgiveness win,
It ain't 'cos I 'm afraid!

THE PRAYER

O God of Battles! Lord of Might!
Keep me, to-morrow, in Your sight!—
Far 'ave I erred an' strayed.
I 've flaunted You, with gibe an' sneer,
At 'ome, with chums to laugh and cheer,
But now, I am alone—out 'ere!
But still I ain't afraid!

O God of Battles! Lord of Might!
The en'my's camp-fires twinkle bright.
To-morrow, Lord, Your aid;
The canteen was my Sunday-school:
The drill-book was my Golden Rule;
Wot are they now? O 'elpless fool!
But still, I 'm not afraid!

O God of Battles! Lord of Might!
The price of every thoughtless slight
To-morrow will be paid!

WRIT IN BARRACKS

A voice is whisp'rin' to my 'eart—
A voice that makes me sweat an' start!—
'To-morrow, soul an' soldier part!'
But I—I'm not afraid!

O God of Battles! Lord of Might!
'Ere, in the silence of the night,
My 'umble prayer is prayed!
All life an' death are one to you!
If I must die—O 'elp me to!
In that last moment, see me through—
My God! I *am* afraid!

CEASE FIRE

THE fight was done an hour ago:
The whole brigade has fallen back,
And I 've been wand'rin' to and fro,
A-askin' any—white or black,
'Say—have you seen my brother, Jack?
His troop was first in the attack!'

I should have seen him here by now:
An hour ago the 'cease fire' went.
He isn't wounded any'ow,
'Cos with the stretcher squads I went,
An' all my other time I 've spent
A-hangin' round the doctor's tent.

WRIT IN BARRACKS

Among the huddled, fallen men
I picked a way across the plain.
I got a dozen yards, an' then
Came back for fear I 'd turn my brain. . . .
The mangled horrors of the slain!
O Christ! I can't go *there* again!

Say, have *you* seen my brother Jack?
Don't know! an' damn you, don't much care!—
But 'scuse me, chum, a-talkin' back,
I 'm sorter flustered with the glare.
These sands are hot, an' so 's the air—
Perhaps he 's doin' guard somewhere!

Old mother said before we went,
'Be sure you keep him in your sight'
(Not knowin' what a campaign meant).
'Don't let him stay out late o' night!'—
I wonder if he funked the fight
An' bolted. O pray God he might!

CEASE FIRE

They're layin' out our dead just now,
  He can't be——, no, that—that ain't sense,
An' when he comes there 'll be a row!
  A-keepin' me in this suspense!
  'Tis here our line of killed commence,
  I 'll sorter look—for make-pretence!

Pretendin' some one 's here I know—
  I 'm half inclined to turn aback—
But one by one, along I go,
  And see the crimson clottin' black. . . .
  His troop was first in the attack!
  What! Jack! Is this—this Thing our Jack?

TOMMY'S AUTOGRAPH

I 'AD lorst my situation, an' the girl she got the 'ump,
An' the naggin' of my muvver nearly drove me orf my chump.
So I 'oofed it down to Woolwich, to the old recruitin' starf,
An' they give to me a paper for to fix my autygrarf!

Just to fix my autygrarf!
Lor' you should a 'eard me larf!
For the blessed Sergeant-Major wos a tryin' on 'is chaff.
Didn't mind the Doctor's soundin's,
Nor 'is soap an' water barf!
But the fing as knocked me silly wos that bloomin' autygrarf!

TOMMY'S AUTOGRAPH

I wos took before the colonel, an' I took a Bible oaf
That I 'd serve my Queen an' country, an' be square
unto them boaf.
Then they got a printed paper, an' this Colonel on
the starf
Sez, 'You 'll kindly read this over, an' affix your
autygrarf!'

To affix my autygrarf!
Larf! You orter 'eard me larf!
Signin' fings like ''Enry Irvin,' Knight Commornder
of the Barf!
Made me want to do a swagger
Like a Piccadilly calf!
On'y fancy! People wantin' Tommy Atkins' auty-
grarf!

Then I signs my name an' birfplace, an' the county I
wos from,
An' I dots the 'i' in Atkins, an' I crorst the 't' in tom.

WRIT IN BARRACKS

A recruit is wurf a dollar, an' the sergeant gets an 'arf;
Just for 'andin' me a paper for to put my autygrarf!

Just to put my autygrarf!
Larf? You should 'ave 'eard *them* larf!
From the colonel wiv 'is spurs on, to the sergeant in 'is scarf.
When I sez, 'Wot's this for, mister?'
Sez the colonel, 'Go to Barf!'
'Don't you know the Queen is anxious for to get your autygrarf?'

I 'ave autygrarfed for clobber, I 'ave autygrarfed for pay;
I 'ave signed it wiv a flourish, I 'ave signed it wiv a 'j'
On an Army Temperance pledge-book
(O the straight an' narrer parf!)—
To a 'drunk' fine in the pay list, I've affixed my autygrarf!

TOMMY'S AUTOGRAPH

Wot a name! An autygrarf!
'Nuff to drive a feller darf';
Callin' Christian name an 'auty' an' the uvver name
a 'grarf,'
Writin' in a pocket-ledger—
'Stead of album bound in calf—
'Doo to soldier: Nil' (that's Latin), an' your bloomin'
autygrarf!

AT THE BRINK!

'Tis now, as we tighten the girth,
'Tis now, as we buckle the sword,
When bitterness hardens our mirth,
'Tis now that we seek you, O Lord!
Give us hope now the future is black,
From fatuous arrogance ward—
The words that we cannot hold back!
Give peace in our time, O Lord!

You know of the hate—folly born;
You know of the wrath—money bred;
The impotent rage, and the scorn,
The trust and the faith that are dead.

AT THE BRINK!

Lest sorrow should spring from the land—
The crop of the seed of the sword—
O, stay the imperious hand;
Give peace in our time, O Lord!

'Tis good when the man loves the land,
'Tis good when he falls for his creed,
But woe to the hate that is fanned
By folly begotten of greed.
When the weak become foolishly strong,
When peoples, unwitting, applaud,—
The folly wrought wrong—still is wrong!
Give peace in our time, O Lord!

When the voice in the senate is stilled;
When the councillor speaks in a tent;
When the lands are untended, untilled;
What use if the stubborn relent?

WRIT IN BARRACKS

What gain will the simpleton's shame,
The shrifts and lamentings, afford?
To-day, on their conduct, the blame;
Give peace in our time, O Lord!

Give peace: that is rooted in Right.
Give peace: that is strengthened by Grace.
Give peace: that we stand in your sight,
Thrice over a justified race.
'Tis peace—and with honour—we need,
And the child of our child shall award
The praise for our failing, or deed.
Give peace in our time, O Lord!

THE KING OF OOJEE-MOOJEE

WE 'ave stowed our ammunition, we 'ave taken in our
store,
An' our very last instructions we 'ave 'ad by semy-fore ;
The Flagship's made a signal, 'We wish you all success,'
An' we 're off to Oojee-Moojee on the armoured cruiser
'Bess.'

For the King of Oojee-Moojee
Is a-comin' of 'is tricks,
'E's cheeked the English Consul,
An' 'e's chucked 'is wooden bricks.
'E won't do kindergarden,
An' 'e's done 'is lessons wrong ;
Altogether Oojee-Moojee
Is a-comin' of it strong !

An' the Point is miles be'ind us, an' 'eadquarters furder still;
We 've exchanged a friendly greetin' wi' the bloke on Signal 'Ill;
We are off to Oojee-Moojee, an' we cannot be detained,
For relations dip-lo-matic 'ave become a trifle strained!

Now the King of Oojee-Moojee is a little coloured kid;
An' 'e rules some thousand niggers, an' 'e does as 'e is bid!
For the Government of England, with 'is interests in view,
'As civilised 'is country—an' collects 'is revenue!

For the King wot reigned afore 'im was an 'eathen nigger thief,
So we sent a missionary, for to teach 'im our belief.

(To prevent misunderstandin's, an' avoid unpleasant
scenes,
We likewise sent an 'Otchkiss, an' a 'undred red
marines.)

'E wouldn't take our gospel, an' unpleasantness arose,
Which cost six whites, and niggermen proportionate
to those;
An' we left the King a-swingin' from a 'Lyptus tree
above,
Just to show as there was iron underneath the velvet
glove.

Then our skipper very kindly did an 'andsome sort of
thing,
For 'e made a proclamation that the nevvy of the
King—
A funny little kiddy, with a sat-on sorter face—
Should rule the Oojee-Moojee, an' should take 'is
uncle's place.

So we dressed 'im up in velvets, an' we fed 'im up on buns,
An' we gave 'is bit of buntin' a salute of twenty guns,
An' we gave to 'im a doctor for to cure 'is chills an' croups;
With a tutor, an' a gen'ral for to organise 'is troops.

So 'is tutor taught 'im manners, an' the way to part 'is 'air,
An' the gen'ral, in 'is spare time, taught 'im proper ways to sware;
The doctor, to complete 'im, was a-teaching him to mill—
When 'is 'ighness put the veto on the Education Bill.

Then 'e cheeked the British Consul!
Then 'e cussed the doctor's wife!
An' 'e chased 'is good, kind tutor, with a bloomin' carvin' knife;

THE KING OF OOJEE-MOOJEE

Tore 'is books an' burnt 'is grammar (said they wasn't
good for 'ealf),
Boned some whisky from the General, an' unchris-
tianised 'isself!

So, we're bound for Oojee-Moojee,
An' we mus'n't be detained;
For relations dip-lo-matic
'Ave become a trifle strained:
'Situations complicated'—
'Warship ordered to the scene!'—
Just because a nigger kiddy's
Playin' truant with the Queen!

THE SONG OF THE TOWN

Sing hey! for the sand-freckled plain;
Sing ho! for the flower-flushed valley;
A song for the ship-sprinkled main,
And the sports where the wanderers rally,
A song for the lawn sloping down—
The lawn with its terrace and fountain,
But here's a song of the square white Town
By the mist-wrapped, cloud-capped mountain!

The whitewashed, square-cut town,
By the grey-green wind-swept sea;
The moving throng,
And the motor gong,
These sing the song for me!

THE SONG OF THE TOWN

Sing hey! for the Town and its folk,
The comers, the goers, the stayers;
The just arrived waster, dead-broke,
The homeward-bound mummers and players;
The white man suspiciously dark!
The trooper-man, newly recruited;
The hand-bagged and frock-coated clerk,
The pioneer corded and booted!

The motley-peopled town!
Its raw and cultured folk,
Live, work, and play
'Twixt Mount and Bay,
And bear one equal yoke.

Sing hey! for the Town, and its dress,
The garbs of the twenty-one nations:
The Kafir in blanket—and less,
The lady in Paris 'creations';

WRIT IN BARRACKS

The-man-about-town, rather loud,
The nigger in checks somewhat rasher;
Here, fez to the turban is bow'd,
There, top-hat comes off to the 'smasher.'

The particoloured town,
Where plush and broadcloth meet:
Where Islam's green
And Worth-wrought sheen
Rub textures in the street!

Sing hey! for the Town, as a town,
A song of its bricks and its plaster;
The slum that is mouldering down—
The mansion that's rising the faster.
Sing hey! for its one-storied past,
Be-flagged, and be-stoeped, and be-whitened;
Its five-storied future more vast,
Its breadth to be broadened and heightened.

THE SONG OF THE TOWN

The grim old, prim old town,
A brand-new vestment wears,
  And arc-lights purr
  Where blue-gums were,
And the blanket-Kafir stares!

BY SIMON'S BAY

In the mountain fold
By the green-blue bay,
Where the waves are flecked
By the evening gold
At the close of day;
And the berg is decked
With a film of grey,
And the mountain's frown
On the darkening town—
My mem'ries stray.

By the fringing beach,
By the restless wave,
Is the straggling town,
And its limits reach

BY SIMON'S BAY

From the highest place
By the mountain's crown
To the mountain's base—
Where the waters lave.

Hopeful Town
By the Cape of Hope;
By the sandy slope
Where the Hills look down;
By the wind-swept kloof—
On the barrack, grim:
On the whitened roof,
On the garden trim:
On the restless Bay
Where the sea-fowl whirls
And the spume-dust swirls
To the Zephyr's whim—
At the close of day.

WRIT IN BARRACKS

Darkening Bay,
Where ever lay
Alert to slip
From leashes taut
A blood-flecked hound
In the pale lean ship;
And where the sound
Of echoing boom
From far away
Is a full-mouthed bay,
As the quarry 's found.
Mournful bay
In green and grey.
I 've thought on you
This many a day.

THE SQUIRE

Sir John of the Isles,
'E stood on 'is lands,
An' looked round 'is large estates:
The lands of waste, an' the lands of corn;
The rose-clad lands, an' the lands of thorn;
An' 'is many gun guarded gates.

Sir John of the Isles,
'E sez to T. A.,
'E sez to T. A., sez 'e,
'Oh, you an' your chum, the sailor-man,
Must scour the country as far as you can
For you are gamekeepers to me.'

WRIT IN BARRACKS

Sir John of the Isles,

'E sez to the swells—

The Downing Street frock-coated crew—

'You are stewards of mine, on Colonial land,

An' my tenants, with seventeen guns an' a band,

Shall pay their respects unto you!'

Sez John of the Isles

To one of the swells,

'Near the lands where you're goin' to Be

Is the dusty estate of a crotchety cuss,

'Oo from time to time causes a great deal of fuss,

For 'e thinks 'e's better nor me.'

Sez John of the Isles,

'The tenants 'e rules

Are a very peculiar lot.

'Is bailifs are 'Ollanders, chock full of guile,

An' they run the estate in a Guy-foxy style,

Which is Dynamite, Treason and Plot!'

THE SQUIRE

Sez John of the Isles,

'Don't mind 'is remarks,

For the land which is 'is—it was mine;

But 'e took it to Law in a court rather grim,

An' a kopje-'id jury decided for 'im!

An' awarded the land as a fine.'

Sir John of the Isles,

'E sez to the swell,

'You 're a gentleman, breedin' an birth,

An' in case of a row, without losin' your 'ead,

You may take my gamekeepers, an' mark 'is land red!

On the survey-map of the Earth!'

THE SEA-NATION

We rose, a people of the sea,
  Nursed by the wind, and rocked by wave.
Our hard, rock-founded history,
  Was born from stories of our brave.
And northern ice-blasts steeled our frames
When war was but the best of games.

We saw a Roman Empire fall,
  And fell; but falling, learned to rise.
We heard the voice of Progress call,
  And in our folly we were wise:
When Briton, Saxon, Norman, Dane,
Bequeathed their progeny the main.

And conquered joined with conqueror;
  And Norman fire, with Saxon zeal
Combined; we swept the world before
  The twanging bow, and clanging steel.
Tyrants unmurm'ring bore our yoke,
And braggarts thought before they spoke.

Then Iron Might took Right to wife;
  And lo! our liberty was born!
We revelled in the newer life
  When King was mated by a pawn.
Men lived between, of mighty worth;
From Montfort's death to Cromwell's birth.

We bore the arrogance of kings,
  But bravèd death in fear of God.
We rose from great, to greater things.
  The weak grew potent at our nod.
And nations watched the scales of Fate,
To see where England threw her weight!

WRIT IN BARRACKS

We took our seed to other climes,
  And from it sprang by divers seas,
An Oak—that grew among the Limes!
  An Oak—among the Blue-gum trees!
The Cactus left the land because
The Acorn brought its ordered laws.

And like a giant, bearing stings
  Of gnats, who joy to see him wince,
We stand—the envy of the kings
  Despised by every petty prince!
Who know, that while enduring yet,
We bear—but we do not forget.

We lived, and live! The world shall see
  An inextinguishable flame.
The nations fade; but we shall be!
  When Gaul and Teuton are a name!
For us the seven seas in one:
For landlocked hordes—oblivion

NATURE FAILS

You can eas'ly understand
That the green of medder-land
Doesn't strike the bloke that 'as to push the roller;
An' Nature at the best,
When you put 'er to the test,
Undiluted, is a very poor consoler.

An' the blue of summer skies
'As no beauties for the eyes
Of defaulters on parade in marchin' order;
An' the rainiest of morns
Brings no feelin's—'cept to corns,
Of a feller pickin' oakum with a warder.

WRIT IN BARRACKS

Wot's the beauty of the spot,
When you're bein' drilled with shot?
Wot is Nature when you're checked for bein' dirty?
An' eternity's a blank
To a feller on the crank,
When ev'ry blessed minute seems like thirty!

Bein' punished for your deeds,
On fatig' a-pickin' weeds,
Can a bloke admire the beauties of the clover?
Does the sunset on the 'ills
Give defaulters any thrills
Except to know the day is nearly over.

Bein' frog-marched to the clink,
Does a feller stop to think
On the grass before 'is eyes so swif'ly runnin',
'Ow that ev'ry single blade
Is most wonderfully made
Wiv a skill beyond all artificial cunnin'?

NATURE FAILS

An' you cannot pant for wars
When you 're scrubbin' barrack floors,
Or get inspired on bully-beef an' biscuit:
It requires a poet's soul
When a feller's cartin' coal
To think 'isself in danger, an' to risk it.

Does a feller care a D—
For the friskin' of a lamb,
When 'e 'as to watch the friskin' thro' a gratin'?
Does the lowin' of the 'erds,
Or the twitterin' of the birds,
Soothe a feller when for punishment 'e's waitin'?

L'ENVOI

In the deepest pits of 'Ell,
Where the worst defaulters dwell

281287B

(Charcoal devils used as fuel as you require 'em),
There 's some lovely coloured rays,
Pyrotechnical displays:
But you can't expect the burnin' to admire 'em!

THE COLONEL'S GARDEN

THERE are gardins, an' there 's gardins,
Some are good, an' some are not.
There are gardins in a glass 'ouse
Where the air is allus 'ot.
But whether on a winder-ledge,
Or in a flower-pot,
I 'll back our Colonel's gardin
For to lick the bilin' lot.

There are gardners, *an'* there 's gardners,
Some are great, an' some are small.
Some could change a bloomin' brickfield
To a Covent Gard'n ball!

WRIT IN BARRACKS

There are some 'oo couldn't 'ardly
Fix a creeper to a wall!
But I 'll back our Colonel's gardner,
Jerry Jordan, 'gin 'em all!

O the flowers they are lovely!
An' the roses they are fair;
An' the daisies they are winkin'
Thro' a lash of maiden-'air!
An' the lilies, tall an' naked—
Tho' it 's little that they care!
An' the garden—under Jerry—
Is a place beyond compare!

There are flowers bloomin' early,
There are flowers bloomin' late;
There is 'oneysuckle climbin'
On the porchway, by the gate.

THE COLONEL'S GARDEN

There 's some cress an' mustard growin'
On a commissairy plate!
O the garden it is lovely—
That 's when Jerry 's on the straight!

. . . . . .

O the garden it 's neglected,
An' the pinks 'ave ceased to pink,
An' the petals they are droppin',
An' the blooms they bend and sink.
O the flowers they are fadin'
Now that Jerry 's took to drink!
O the flowers they 're neglected—
Jerry Jordan 's in the clink!

For the flowers will not blossom,
An' they don't give out no smells,
The convul'vus it is weepin'
From its verigated bells.

WRIT IN BARRACKS

An' the lily 's in hysterics,
An' she faints away in spells:
O there 's weepin', an' there 's wailin'—
Jerry Jordan 's doin' cells!

. . . . . .

O the path is rolled an' gravelled,
An' the gardin 's fresh as rain,
An' the weeds that strewed the borders
They no longer there remain.
An' the flowers they are smilin',
For they 're out of all their pain;
An' the bees they 'um for gladness—
Jerry Jordan 's out again!

THE PEOPLE TO CECIL JOHN RHODES,
JULY 18, 1899

By the bond that binds the scattered folk to home,
We have come,
By thé love to dear old England which you bear—
And we share,
By the knowledge of the Empire you extend—
Britain's friend!—
We are gathered, many thousand people, to
Welcome you!

We are strangers drawn together by one tie,
They and I,
Merely men who, having never met before,
Meet no more!

But a common cause has bridged the social breach,
Each to each
Has one soft word of fellowship to say,
Here to-day.

If you search among our numbers you will find
Every kind:
Dutchman, Briton, 'Africander,' and Malay
In array;
Christian, Mussulman, and he of Abram's seed—
Every creed:
With the worshippers of *Sakyanumi's* mud—
Mighty Budh.

But if every heart was melted, and when done
Moulded one—
If a welcome in a polyglotic tongue
Could be sung—
If one voice could speak our sentiments to-day,
We would say,

THE PEOPLE TO CECIL JOHN RHODES

Very simply: 'We are glad that you are come—
Welcome home!'

We have followed you, and watched your noble stand
For your land.
And your triumphs and your greatly troubled hours,
Have been ours:
And our sympathetic wishes for your cause,
Have been yours:
Since the day on which you left us to go forth,
'For my North!'

We have followed you through many foreign ways,
In these days.
By the Nilus, on the Desert, new surveyed,
You have strayed:
By the Pyramids and palms of Cairo town,
Parched and brown:
By the quiet shades of Oxford, prim and green,
You have been.

WRIT IN BARRACKS

In the stately city hall, in spirit we
Came to see
The cheering thousands testify belief,
In their Chief.
In the regal courts of Potsdam, at your side
We were tied,
By the tighter bond than kinship ever drew—
We and you!

If our hearts in concord melted and were run
Into one!
If a welcome in a polyglotic tongue,
Could be sung:
If two words could voice our sentiments to-day,
We would say—
Very simply, being glad that you are come—
'Welcome home!'

WHEN LONDON CALLS!

THERE 's a voice that calls to Mecca, there 's a voice
that calls to Rome.
(O the Holiest of Holies! O the Temple and the
Shrine!)
There 's a bleating from a pasture, and it calls a
wand'rer home.
(O the friskings of the yearlings, and the lowing of
the kine!)
There 's a penetrating whisper that can rise above the
gale
From the cot of thatch and plaster, from the oaken-
gabled hall,
From the limpid lake of silver in the verdant velvet-vale,
From the shamrock and the heather,
Hear the call!

WRIT IN BARRACKS

There 's a voice that calls the waster, when the doors of home are shut.

(O the voice of club and chamber, and the arc-light burning blue !)

There 's a voice that calls the trooper in his daub and wattle hut.

(O the midnight cabs that rattle from the Strand to Waterloo !)

There 's a voice for ever calling from the Square and from the Slum,

From the Hornsey Rise to Brixton, from St. Saviour's to St. Paul's.

'Tis the never-changing message of the everlasting 'Come'

To the brick and to the mortar.

London calls !

You may still the voice of conscience, and suppress the blush of shame.

WHEN LONDON CALLS!

(O the deed that made you outlaw! O the folly and the sin!)
But never man ignored it when the call to London came.
(The call from belfry tower! O the clanging, banging din!)
'Tis the wooded green of Greenwich with the deer among the fern.
'Tis the bleak, blank streets of Lambeth, where the drizzling fog-mist falls.
It 's a weary aching whisper, and it murmurs, 'O return
To the Elegance, the Squalor.
London calls!'

'Tis the swelling roar of Epsom, with the backers seven deep.
(O the rush around the Corner, and the finish on the Straight!)
'Tis the tinkling hum of Henley as it snuggles down to sleep.

WRIT IN BARRACKS

(O the light-lined laughing river, with its fairy-fancied fête!)
'Tis the growl of Ratcliffe Highway, 'tis the lisp of Rotten Row;
'Tis the beauty that entrances, 'tis the horror that appals;
'Tis the firemen's horses tearing to the midnight sky aglow;
It 's a vague and restless—something.
London calls!

It is early morning Fleet Street, when the throbbing presses fly.
(O the Father of the Chapel! O the ticking, talking tape!)
'Tis the universal High Street, where the world may see and buy.
(O the steamboat of Newcastle! O the feather of the Cape!)

WHEN LONDON CALLS!

'Tis the heart of all creation, where the veins of commerce meet;
'Tis the centre seat in gall'ry, 'tis the booked and numbered stalls;
'Tis the barrow in Whitechapel, 'tis the brougham in Regent Street;
'Tis the Commonplace—the Novel.
London calls!

'Tis the glitter and the jingle on the Foreign Office stairs.
(O the starred and gartered Levee! O the Rulers of the Land!)
'Tis the crowd about the stretcher and the burden that it bears.
(O the ward in darkened silence! O the swiftly running sand!)
'Tis the message of the letter, 'tis the message of the wire;

WRIT IN BARRACKS

'Tis the dainty hand that types it, 'tis the awkward
fist that scrawls;
'Tis the memory that sickens, 'tis the thought that
burns like fire;
'Tis the life that's worth the living!
London calls!

'Tis the cheering of the Commons and the cry of
'Who goes home?'
(O the bell that rings Division! O the seat beneath
the card!)
'Tis the choir-boys' voices rising to the lofty, painted
dome.
(O the flutter of the pigeons in the flagged and mossy
yard!)
'Tis the Sabbath bells that echo down the silent city
streets;
'Tis the Steel inside the Velvet! 'Tis the stroking
hand that mauls!

WHEN LONDON CALLS!

'Tis the Tutor, it's the Master. It prepares and it completes!

It is London—and its LONDON!

And it calls!

CAIROWARDS

Going up—and by all one man's will!
Untrodden lands shall echo with our roars,
Our engines' wheels shall break the mountains' still,
Uncharted rivers see us by their shores;
And where the lions drink, and panthers prey,
Shall lie the ballast of our iron-bound way.

Going up! Primæval forest, where
The Bushman lurks with poison at his lips,
Must give its best, and all its treasures bare,
When our iron-monster in its hollows dips;
And caves, from which the cobra issues forth,
Shall be a Somewhere Junction—for the North.

CAIROWARDS

Going up! Eternal snows, that crown
The lonely summits of the lordly hills,
Shall look upon our laboured paths, and frown
Upon the girdered bridge that spans their rills;
But, clinging to the slope, with scanty hold,
The road shall be unfastened, fold by fold.

Going up! The stifling winds that blow
Across the sweep of fiery desert waste
Shall clog and cloy our workings as we go,
And strive to check us in our desp'rate haste,
With sand that holds us in its shifting clutch—
And iron and brass shall blister to the touch.

Going up! The Nile in sullen wrath
Shall rise and smite the sleeper from the rail,
And say: 'Behold the Mistress of the North!
Who does not let the work of man prevail!'
But patient man shall strive against her might
Until the palms of Cairo are in sight!

WRIT IN BARRACKS

ODE TO THE OPENING OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN EXHIBITION, 1898

FATHER of all!
Robèd in splendour,
Thou who dost wield
Almighty power,
All things are thine,
Fruitage and flower—
Cattle and kine—
Vineyard and field!
Hear, when we call,
Praising the Sender!

Father of all!
Strong to deliver!
Here, do we place,

ODE TO THE SOUTH AFRICAN EXHIBITION

Down at Thy feet,
Fruits of our hands—
Trophies of wheat,
Won from Thy lands—
Trophies of chase.
Hear, when we call,
Praising the Giver!

Father of all!
Weaver and fuller;
Craftsman and herd;
Chapman and knave;
Worker and drone;
Headman and slave,
Worship a-prone—
Bow to Thy word!
Hear Thou our call,
Praising the Ruler!

WRIT IN BARRACKS

Father of all!
Billow and breaker
Sink to Thy nod!
Here, have we brought,
That which we found,
That which we wrought,
Drawn from Thy ground,
Culled from Thy sod.
Hear, when we call,
Praising the Maker!

Father of all!
Thine is the story
Written in space!
What Thou hast made
Knows not of death.
Let us not fade,

ODE TO THE SOUTH AFRICAN EXHIBITION

Catching Thy breath,

Live by Thy grace!

Hear Thou our call,

Thine is the Glory!

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AUGUST 1900

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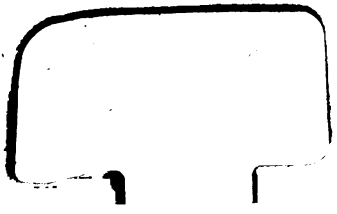
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